ALBERTA SOLICITOR GENERAL

2002 PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY ON PERFORMANCE OF THE RCMP PROVINCIAL POLICE

Presented to:

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Executive Summary

The key findings of a telephone survey of a random and representative sample of 800 adult Albertans living in rural areas of the province on the performance of the RCMP Provincial Police, conducted by Research Innovations Inc. on behalf of Alberta Solicitor General in November 2002, were as follows:

Satisfaction with RCMP Provincial Policing

- The vast majority were satisfied with RCMP policing in their community (85% satisfied). There has been little change since 1997 in the level of satisfaction with policing. (87% were satisfied in both 2000 and 1997).
- The reason indicated most often for being dissatisfied with RCMP policing was the lack of manpower, presence and visibility in the community.
- Most rural Albertans agreed that the RCMP are:
  - Doing a good job in dealing with the problems that really concern people (82% agreed).
  - Doing a good job to help prevent crime (81% agreed).
  - Doing a good job in working together with the residents of communities to solve local problems (78% agreed).
  - Doing a good job to help victims of crime (72% agreed)
  - Spending enough time on the problems that are important in their communities (69% agreed).

Contact with Police

- Of the rural Albertans who had a crime committed against them in the past twelve months (n=205), approximately half (53%) contacted their local RCMP as a result of the crime(s).
- The reason cited most often for not contacting their local RCMP as a result of the crime(s) was that the damage or vandalism was not severe enough.
- Of those who contacted the RCMP as a result of the crime(s) committed against them (n=109), 65% were satisfied with how the RCMP handled their situation.
- The majority of rural Albertans felt that the RCMP are responsive (81%) to local community concerns and are helpful (86%) in dealing with the local community.

Fear of Crime in the Community

- Since 2000, there has been an increase in the percentage of rural Albertans who expressed general fear of crime:

- 26% agreed that fear of crime is very high in their community (compared to 13% in 2000 and 15% in 1997).
- 21% agreed that their own fear of crime is very high (compared to 14% in 2000 and 19% in 1997)

- Despite this increase in general fear of crime, rural Albertans were more likely to agree that they feel safe walking alone at night in their community (84% in 2002, compared to 71% in 2000 and 72% in 1997).
- Consistent with the increase in general fear of crime, there was an increase in the percentage of Albertans who agreed that:
  - They believe that there is a problem with crime among youth in their community (60% agreed in 2002). When a similar question was asked in previous years, only 27% agreed in 2000, and 34% agreed in 1997
  - There are areas in their community that they avoid at night because of the danger of being harassed or attacked (16% agreed in 2002, compared to 10% in 2000 and 13% in 1997).
- Most rural Albertans (81%) stated that worrying about crime impacts their choice of activities none of the time. Nineteen percent (19%) said it as impacting their choice of activities at least some of the time.

Crime Victimization

- In 2002, 14% of rural Albertans said they were a victim of crime in the past year, compared to 8% in 2000.
- When provided with specific description of various crimes, 26% of rural Albertans indicated that they were a victim of crime.

Crime Prevention Activities/Communications

- Over half (53%) of rural Albertans are aware of at least one crime prevention activity or initiative in which their local RCMP are involved.
- Crime Watch, DARE and other drug programs were mentioned most often as the crime prevention activities or initiatives in which the RCMP are involved.
- Since 2000, there has been an 11% decrease in the percentage or rural Albertans who indicated that they had received a pamphlet, brochure or newsletter outlining what they can do to protect themselves or their home from crime (21% in 2002, compared to 32% in 2000 and 37% in 1997).

Suggested Additional Activities

- When asked what other things they would like to see the RCMP doing in their community, the most frequent comments were related to having more manpower and being more visible in the community.

1.0 Introduction

In the fall of 2002, Alberta Solicitor General wished to survey rural Albertans in order to obtain feedback on the effectiveness of community policing provided by the RCMP Provincial Police. This survey has been conducted in both 1997 and 2000 by the Ipsos Reid Group (formerly the Angus Reid Group).

In October 2002, Alberta Solicitor General commissioned Research Innovations Inc. to conduct the survey of rural Albertans. The results of this survey, as outlined in this report, provide relevant and actionable measures to assist the RCMP and the Solicitor General's department to assess and make decisions in response to public perceptions and opinions of RCMP community policing in rural Alberta.

1.1 Background

In 1989, the RCMP adopted the philosophy and principles of community policing as its model of service delivery in order to provide more collaborative, responsive and effective policing services to Canadians. Those communities served by the RCMP play a key role in the recognition, development and enactment of community policing needs and are active partners in many of the principal police tasks, such as crime prevention program services, operational support and enforcement.

Defined as, "a partnership between the police and the community, sharing in the delivery of police services," community policing has allowed the RCMP to:

- Provide a professional standard of service;
- Ensure all police services are provided courteously and impartially;
- Work with communities and other agencies to prevent or resolve problems that impact upon a community's safety and quality of life;

- Act within the Canadian justice system to address community problems; and
- Promote a creative and responsive environment to allow all RCMP members to deliver community policing services.

1.2 SURVEY OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the 2002 Public Opinion Survey of Rural Albertans were to:

- Measure levels of *satisfaction with RCMP policing* among survey respondents;
- Identify levels of and perceptions regarding *fear of crime in the community*;
- Measure the incidence of *crime victimization* among survey respondents within the previous 12 months;
- Provide estimates of *contact with the RCMP*, both as a result of a crime or within the community;
- Identify the incidence of participation in *crime prevention activities/communications* within rural Alberta communities; and
- Provide survey respondents with an outlet to *suggest additional activities* they would like to see the RCMP doing in their community.

Where applicable, results of the 2002 Public Opinion survey will be compared to results of the 1997 and 2000 surveys.

2.0 Methodology

All components of the project were executed in close consultation with representatives of Alberta Solicitor General. Research Innovations Inc. conducted the research in three phases:

Phase 1:	Orientation, Questionnaire Design and Sampling
Phase 2:	Telephone Interviews
Phase 3:	Analysis and Reporting

A detailed description of each phase is outlined in the remainder of this section.

2.1 Phase 1: Orientation, Questionnaire Design and Sampling

Orientation and Questionnaire Design – At the outset of the project, Research Innovations met with representatives of Alberta Solicitor General to discuss the details of the study, review the past survey questions and methods, and redesign the survey instrument as required to meet their needs. Following review by representatives of Alberta Solicitor General, the questionnaire was finalized. Most of the 2002 questions were similar or identical to those asked in previous years. A copy of the final questionnaire can be found in Appendix B.

Sampling – The sample for the 2002 Public Opinion Survey was comprised of a random and representative sample of rural Albertans, who are 18 years of age or older, residing in towns and villages with populations under 2,500 and other rural areas of the province.

A total 800 rural Albertans were interviewed, including 400 in the RCMP North District and 400 in the RCMP South District. A sample of this size provides a margin of error that is no greater than $\pm$ 3.5% at the 95% confidence level at the provincial level and $\pm$ 5.0% at the 95% confidence level at the district level. To survey a random and representative sample of rural

Albertans, quotas were established based on Statistics Canada's *2001 Census* data. In each of the two RCMP provincial districts, the number of required interviews in each age (18-34, 35-54, 55 years or older)-gender segment was proportionate to their 2001 population estimates as outlined in Table A.

Table A

2002 Public Opinion Survey Sampling Frame			
District	*Estimated Population*	*Proportion of RCMP District Population*	*Representative Number of Interviews (Quotas)*
North:			
Males, 18 to 34 years	32,720	0.1680	67
Females, 18 to 34 years	32,695	0.1679	67
Males 35 to 54 years	39,735	0.2041	82
Females, 35 to 54 years	36,500	0.1874	75
Males, 55 years or more	27,295	0.1402	56
Females, 55 years or more	25,780	0.1324	53
TOTAL	194,725	1.0	400
South:			
Males, 18 to 34 years	34,330	0.1618	65
Females, 18 to 34 years	33,520	0.1580	63
Males 35 to 54 years	44,110	0.2079	83
Females, 35 to 54 years	42,055	0.1983	79
Males, 55 years or more	28,510	0.1344	54
Females, 55 years or more	29,620	0.1396	56
TOTAL	212,145	1.0	400
TOTAL FOR BOTH DISTRICTS	406,870		800

The sample was drawn randomly from the most recent residential phone listings within rural Alberta. The last two digits of each telephone number were randomized, thereby allowing inclusion in the sample of new and unpublished listings. To maximize the representativeness of the sample, ten call back attempts were scheduled for each listing prior to excluding it from the

final sample. Busy numbers were scheduled for a call back every fifteen minutes. When there was an answering machine, fax or no answer, the call back was scheduled at a different time period on the following day. The first attempts to reach each listing were made during the evening or weekend. This call schedule helped maximize the likelihood of contacting each household listed, thereby helping to improve the representativeness of the final sample.

2.2 PHASE 2: TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS

All interviews were conducted by trained and experienced interviewers at Research Innovations' Central Location Telephone Interviewing Facility in Edmonton. The interviewing was monitored in progress, and at minimum, 10% of each interviewer's work was directly monitored. Interviewers were thoroughly briefed by the project leader prior to working on the project.

The survey instrument was programmed into Research Innovations' Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) System. Using this system, data collection and data entry were simultaneous given that data was entered into a computer file while the interview was in progress. *Interviewer* was the software used by the CATI system. Using *Interviewer*, all required skip patterns were automatically followed, and question order was randomly rotated as required to minimize potential question order bias. Using the system, interviewers directly entered responses to both closed and open-ended questions.

Using *Interviewer's* call management capability, the outcome of each call attempt was recorded, and callbacks were automatically scheduled according to the sampling callback rules. The final outcome of all call attempts for the survey is provided in Appendix C.

2.3 PHASE 3: ANALYSIS AND REPORTING

Data Analysis – Responses to each open-ended question were printed and then coded, using a code list approved by the project director. Coded responses were then entered into the data file. Ten percent of each coder's work was checked for accuracy and consistency.

At the computer analysis stage, computer programs were written to check the data for quality and consistency (e.g. no out-of-range values, proper skip patterns, etc.). Subsequent data analysis was conducted using STATXP software. Data tables were generated, whereby the frequency and percentage distribution of the results for each question were broken down on the basis of key respondent characteristics or responses (e.g. RCMP district, age, gender, type of community, type of household, education and income).

This report summarizes responses to the 2002 survey questions and provides a comparison of the results for those questions that were asked in previous year's surveys (1997 and 2000).

3.0 Results

This section presents the results of the 2002 Public Opinion Survey of rural Albertans, as they pertain to each topic area addressed in the questionnaire. When reviewing the results, please note that rounding must often be done in order to report the different categories of responses to a particular question. Because of this, the total of the different categories of responses to a particular question may not always total 100%.

3.1 Fear of Crime in the Community

3.1.1 General Fear of Crime in Rural Communities

Rural Albertans were asked to rate, using a scale of "strongly agree," "somewhat agree," "somewhat disagree" and "strongly disagree," whether the fear of crime is very high in their community, and whether their own fear of crime is very high.

As indicated in Figure 1, roughly one-quarter (26%) of rural Albertans agreed that fear of crime is very high in their community (5% strongly agreed and 21% somewhat agreed). Figure 1 shows that respondents were more likely to agree with this statement in 2002 than they were in 2000 or 1997. Nonetheless, in 2002, the majority disagreed (74%) that fear of crime is very high in their community.

Figure 2 shows that one in five (21%) agreed that their own fear of crime is very high (6% strongly agreed and 15% somewhat agreed), while the majority (79%) disagreed. The percentage of respondents who agreed that their own fear of crime is high has risen to 21% from 14% in 2000, bringing it back in line with the 1997 level of 19%.

In reviewing the differences between subgroups of respondents:

- Those residing in the North RCMP District (28%) were slightly more likely than those in the South RCMP District (22%) to agree that fear of crime is very high in their community and that their own fear of crime is very high (24% North District vs. 19% South District).
- Those victimized by a crime in the past year (n=205) were much more likely than those not victimized by a crime to agree that fear of crime is very high in their community (39% vs. 20%) and that their own fear of crime is very high (29% vs. 18%).
- Females (24%) were somewhat more apt than males (18%) to agree that their own fear of crime is very high.

Figure 1

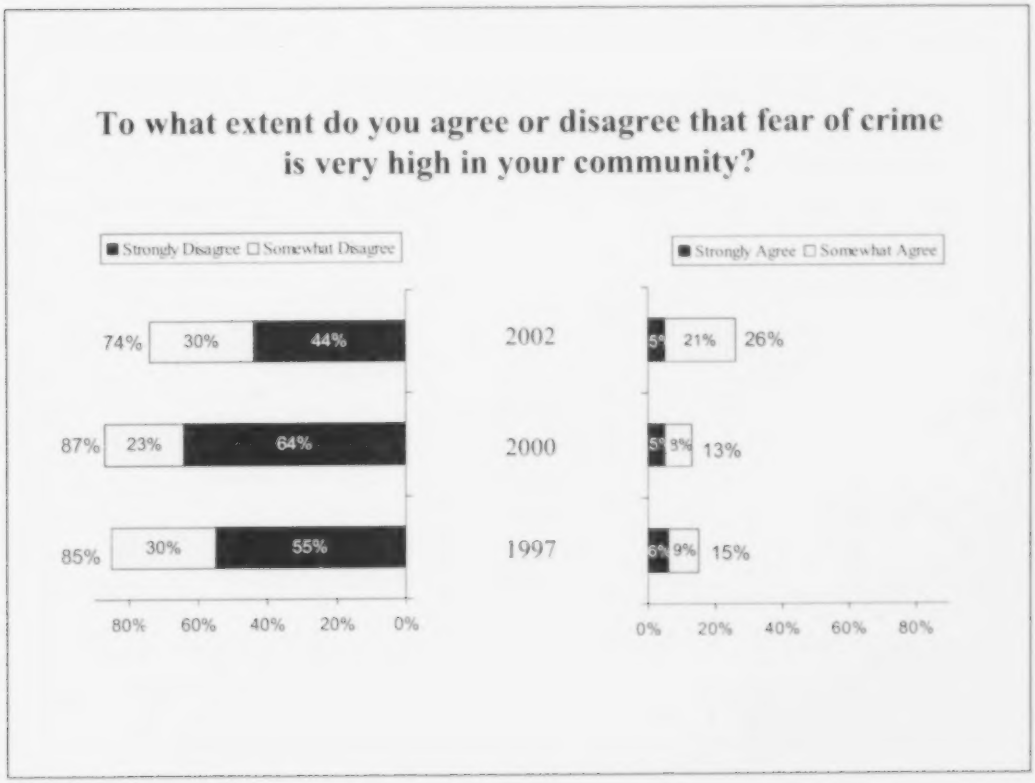
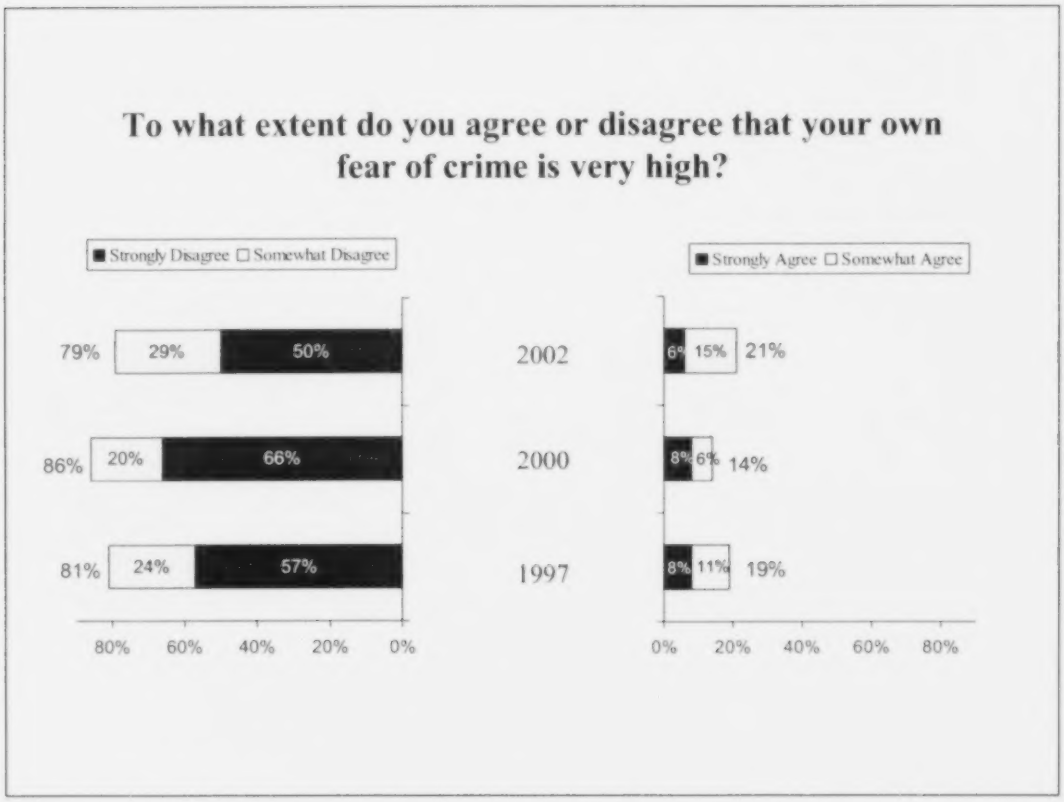


Figure 2


To what extent do you agree or disagree that your own fear of crime is very high?
Strongly Disagree
Somewhat Disagree
Strongly Agree
Somewhat Agree
79%
29%
50%
2002
6%
15%
21%
86%
20%
66%
2000
8%
6%
14%
81%
24%
57%
1997
8%
11%
19%
80%
60%
40%
20%
0%
0%
20%
40%
60%
80%

3.1.2 Targeted Fear of Crime in Rural Communities

Respondents were then asked to indicate how strongly they agree or disagree with a number of other, more "targeted" statements regarding fear of crime in their community. See Figures 3 to 9.

Despite the increase in general fear of crime, as shown in Figure 3, in 2002 rural Albertans were more likely to agree that they feel safe walking alone at night in their community (84% agreed in 2002, compared to 71% in 2000 and 72% in 1997).

Consistent with the increase in general fear of crime, Figures 4 and 7 show that, in 2002, there were increases in agreement with the following two statements:

- 60% agreed that there is a problem with crime among youth in their community (compared to 27% in 2000 and 34% in 1997 who agreed that there is a youth crime problem in their community).
- 16% agreed that there are areas in their community that they avoid at night because of the danger of being harassed or attacked (compared to 10% in 2000 and 13% in 1997).

In 2002, baseline data was obtained regarding other specific aspects that relate to the general fear of crime:

- 38% agreed that they are worried that someone will break into their home while no one is there (Figure 5).
- 32% agreed that there is a good chance that they will be the victim of a property crime this year, such as a theft or a break and enter (Figure 6).
- 13% agreed that there is a good chance that they will be the victim of a crime of violence this year, such as an assault or robbery (Figure 8).
- 5% agreed that they avoid going out in their community because they are afraid of crime (Figure 9).

Figure 3

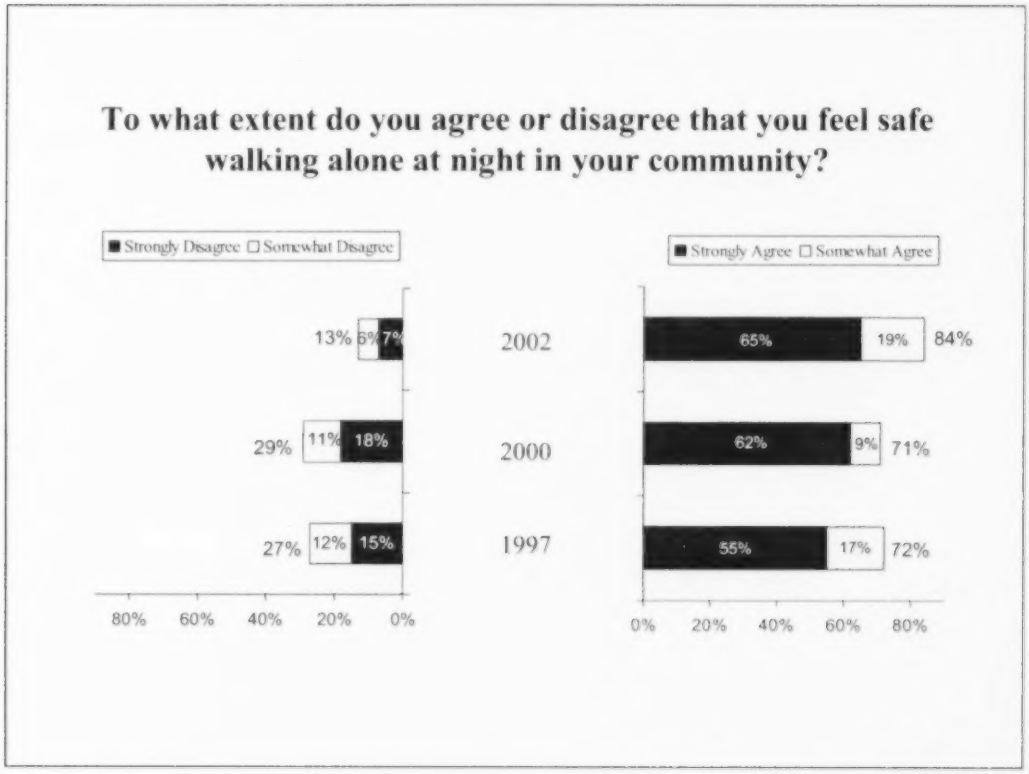
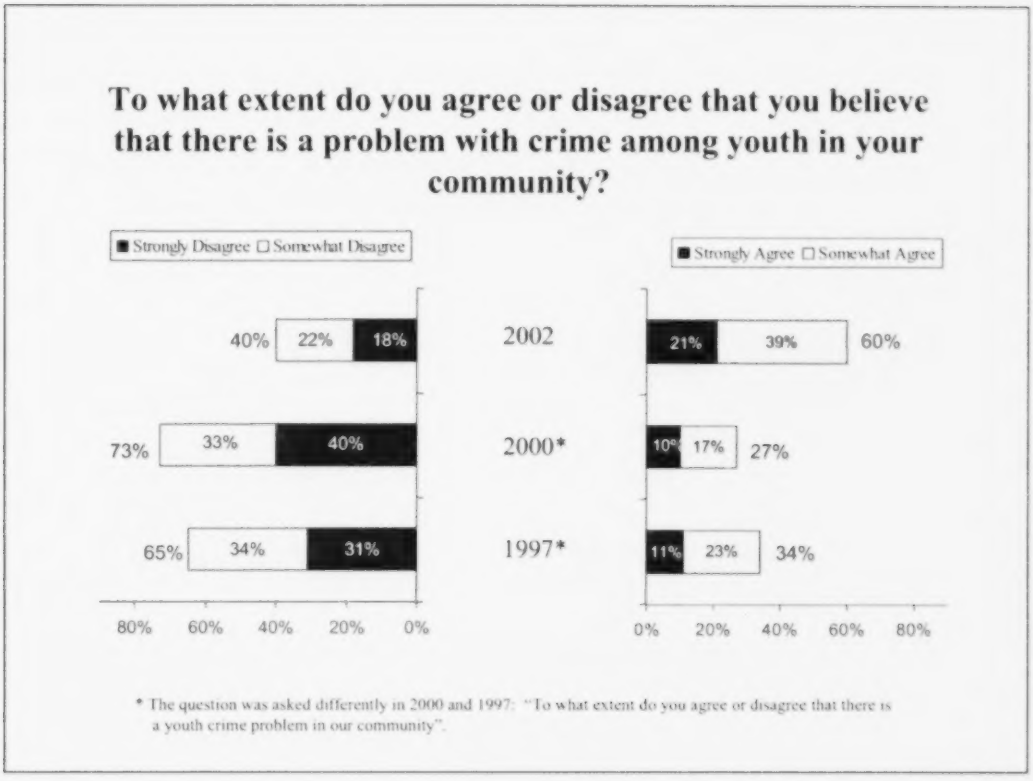

To what extent do you agree or disagree that you feel safe walking alone at night in your community?
Strongly Disagree
Somewhat Disagree
Strongly Agree
Somewhat Agree
2002
2000
1997
13%
6%
7%
29%
11%
18%
27%
12%
15%
65%
19%
84%
62%
9%
71%
55%
17%
72%
80%
60%
40%
20%
0%
0%
20%
40%
60%
80%

Figure 4



* The question was asked differently in 2000 and 1997: "To what extent do you agree or disagree that there is a youth crime problem in our community".

Figure 5

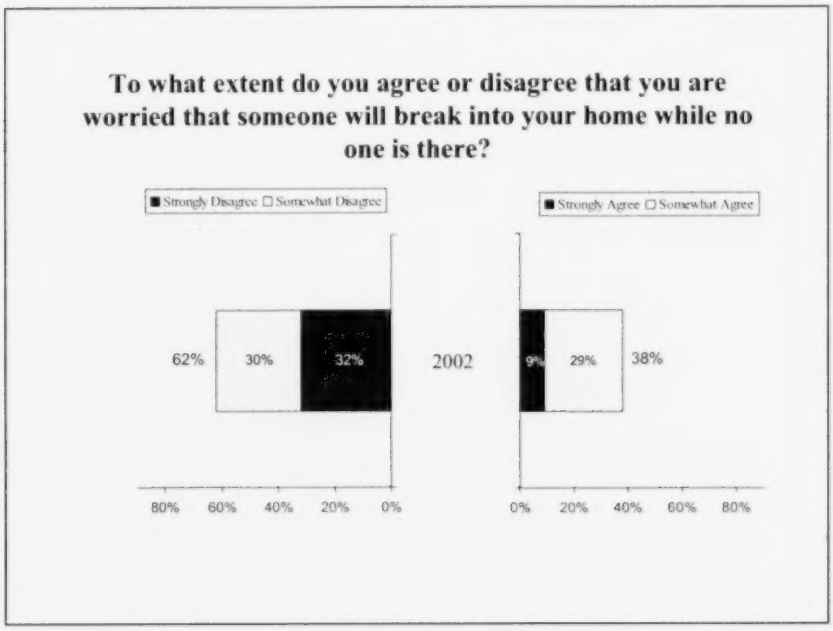


Figure 6

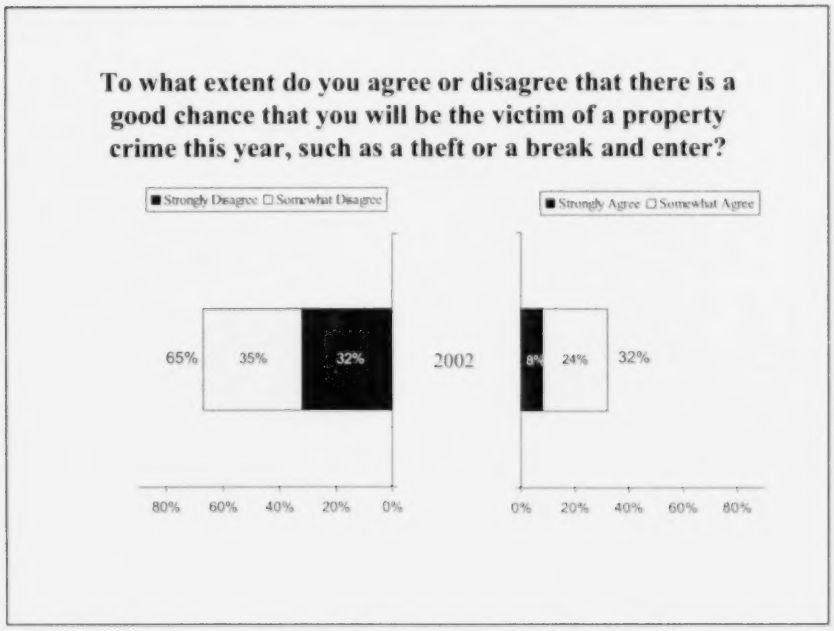


Figure 7

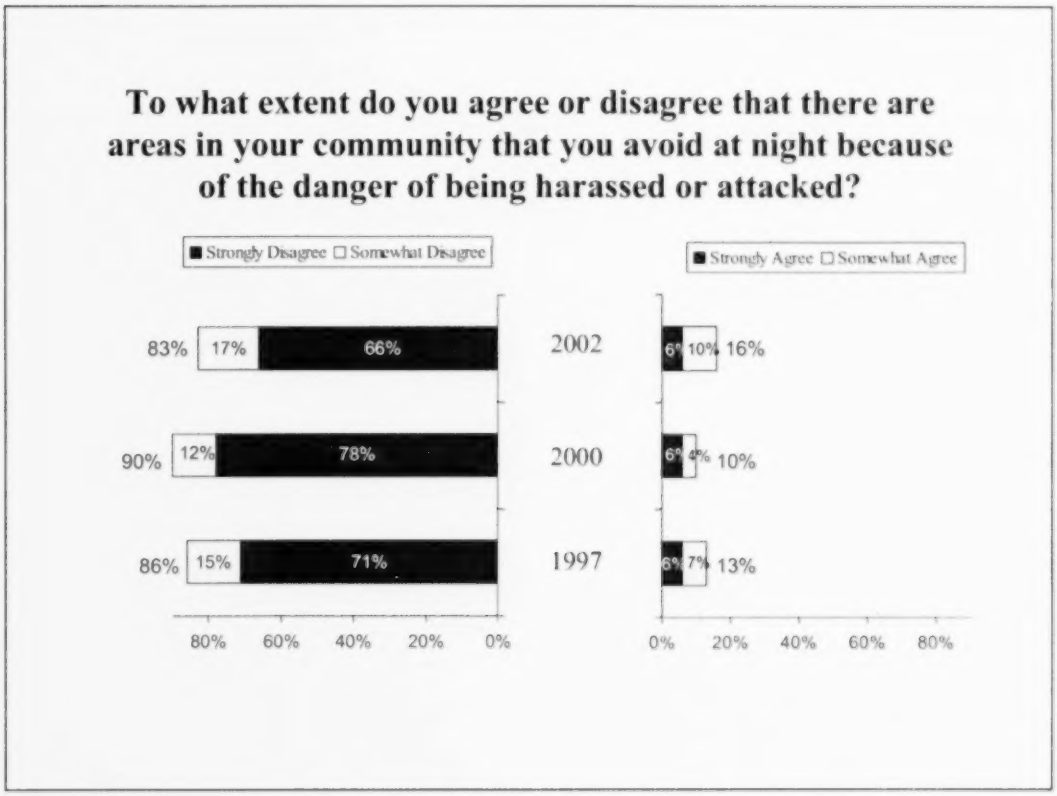

To what extent do you agree or disagree that there are areas in your community that you avoid at night because of the danger of being harassed or attacked?
Strongly Disagree
Somewhat Disagree
Strongly Agree
Somewhat Agree
83%
17%
66%
2002
6%
10%
16%
90%
12%
78%
2000
6%
4%
10%
86%
15%
71%
1997
6%
7%
13%
80%
60%
40%
20%
0%
0%
20%
40%
60%
80%

Figure 8

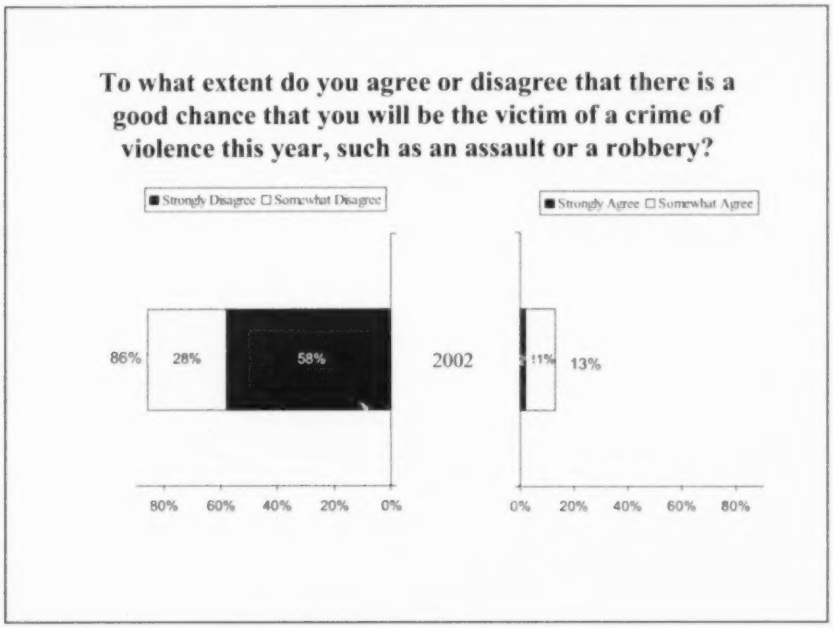
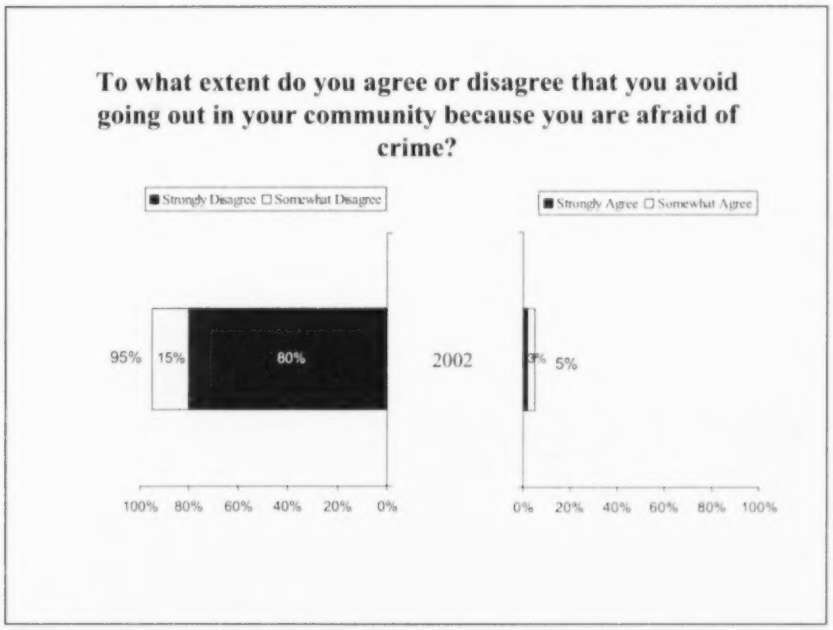


Figure 9



Rural Albertans residing in the North RCMP district were more likely than those residing in the South RCMP District to agree that:

- They believe that there is a problem with crime among youth in their community (62% North District vs. 56% South District).
- They are worried that someone will break into their home while no one is there (41% North District vs. 33% South District).
- There are areas in their community that they avoid at night because of the danger of being harassed or attacked (19% North District vs. 12% South District).

Those respondents who had been victims of crime (n=205) in the past year were more likely than non-victims to agree that:

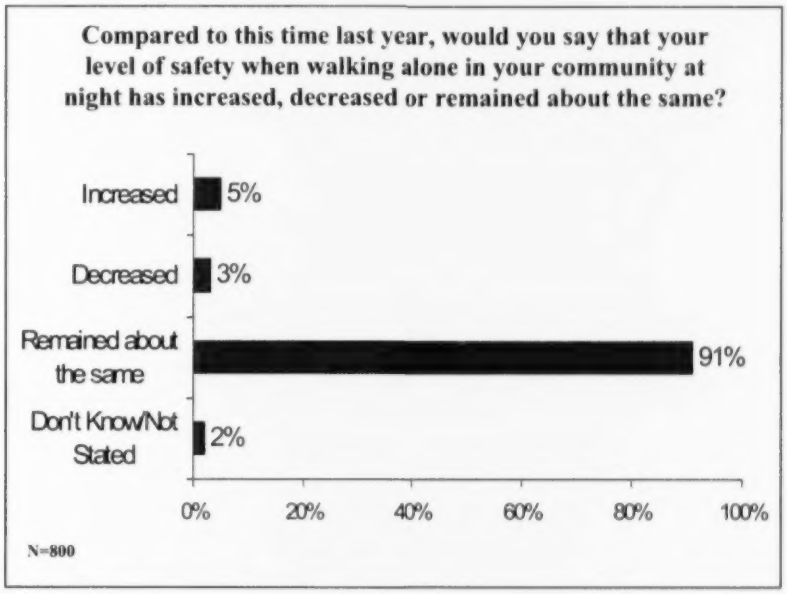
- They believe that there is a problem with crime among youth in their community (79% vs. 53%).
- They are worried that someone will break into their home while no one is there (55% vs. 31%).
- There is a good chance that they will be the victim of a property crime this year, such as a theft or a break and enter (53% vs. 21%).
- There is a good chance that they will be the victim of a crime of violence this year, such as an assault or a robbery (27% vs. 9%).
- They are afraid of going out in their community because they are afraid of crime (10% vs. 3%).

3.1.3 Perceptions of "Nightime Safety" Over Last Year

Respondents were asked to indicate, compared to this time last year, whether their level of safety when walking alone in their community at night has increased, decreased or remained about the same.

The vast majority (91%) of rural Albertans indicated that their level of safety when walking alone in their community at night has remained about the same as last year. Five percent (5%) felt that their level of safety has increased over last year, while 3% stated that their level of safety has decreased from the same period last year. See Figure 10.

Figure 10



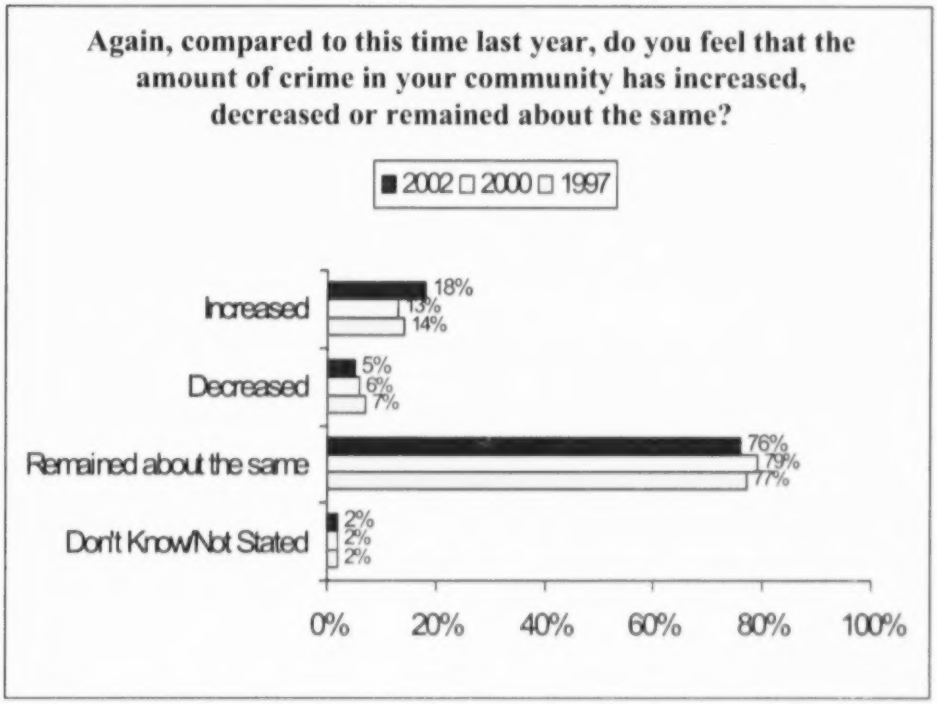
Interestingly, victims of crime (n=205) were more apt to state that their level of safety when walking alone at night has increased over last year (10% of victims vs. 3% of non-victims).

3.1.4 Perceptions of the Amount of Crime Over Last Year

Rural Albertans were then asked to indicate whether they feel that the amount of crime in their community has increased, decreased or remained about the same, compared to this time last year.

Most rural Albertans (76%) believe that the amount of crime in their community has remained the same from the previous year. In comparison, 18% felt that the amount of crime has increased, whereas 5% believed that the amount of crime in their community has decreased from the previous year (Figure 11). In 2002, rural Albertans were somewhat more likely to say that the amount of crime has increased (18%) than they were in 2000 (13%) or 1997 (14%).

Figure 11



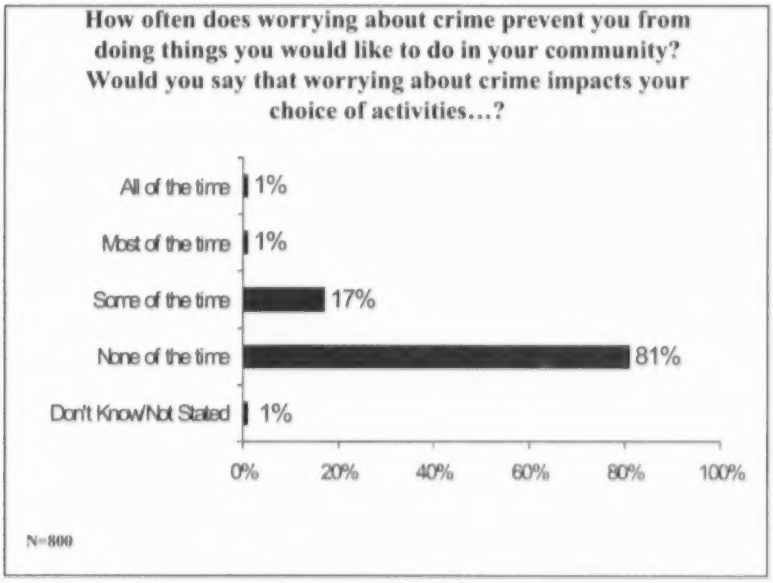
Victims of crime (n=205) were more likely than non-victims (31% versus 13%) to state that the amount of crime in their community has increased over the previous year.

3.1.5 Impact of Worrying About Crime on Choice of Activities

Respondents were asked to indicate how often worrying about crime prevents them from doing things they would like to do in their community, using a scale of "all of the time," "most of the time," "some of the time" and "none of the time."

According to Figure 12, worrying about crime impacts 19% of rural Albertans' choice of activities at least some of the time.

Figure 12



The activities of victims of crime (n=205) were more likely to be impacted by worrying about crime (66% of victims indicated none of the time, compared to 86% of non-victims).

3.2 CRIME VICTIMIZATION

3.2.1 Levels of Crime Victimization

When asked whether they had been a victim of a crime in the past year, 14% of rural Albertans said they had been a victim at least once in the past year.

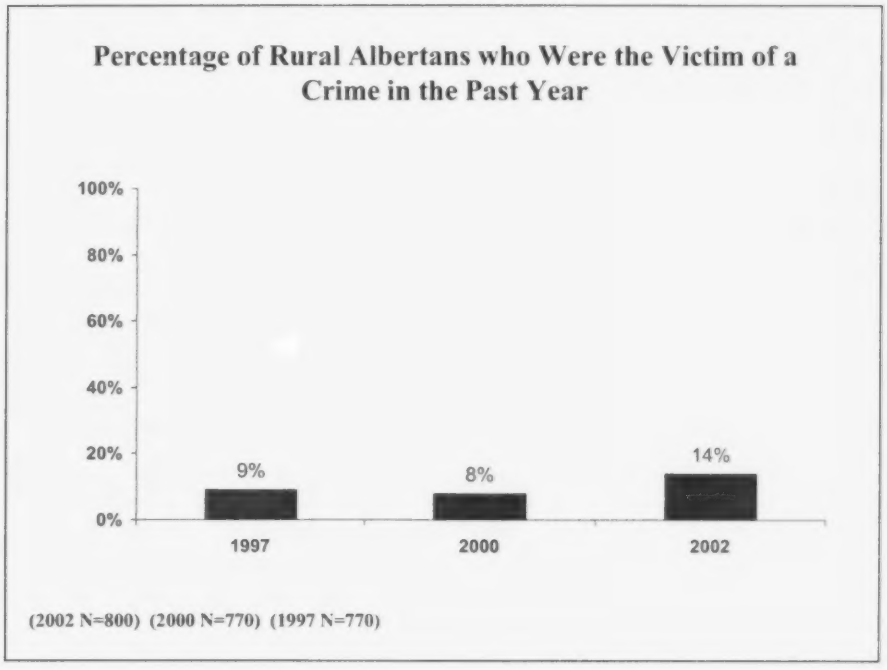
Young adults, 18 to 34 years of age, were most likely to say that they have been a victim of crime in the past year (21% said they have been a victim). Adults 55 years of age or older were least likely to say they have been a victim (5%).

Males (16%) were also slightly more likely than females (11%) to have been a victim of crime in the past year, in addition to those residing in a town or village (17%) versus those living on a farm or acreage (11%).

Figure 13 shows that, since 2000, there was a 6% increase in the number of rural Albertans who reported having crime(s) committed against them. It should be noted that this increase from 8% in 2000 to 14% in 2002 may be attributable to the differences in the sample of Albertans that participated in the survey, rather than to an actual increase in crime victimization.

In the 2002 survey, quotas were established, based on Statistics Canada census data, to ensure that the final sample was representative by RCMP District and, within each District, by gender and age. As a consequence, the 2002 survey sample had a higher proportion of respondents who were 18 to 34 years of age (32%). As younger adults are more likely to be victimized, their increased representation in the 2002 survey sample may explain much of the increase in the overall victimization rate.

Figure 13


Percentage of Rural Albertans who Were the Victim of a Crime in the Past Year
100%
80%
60%
40%
20%
0%
9%
8%
14%
1997
2000
2002
(2002 N=800) (2000 N=770) (1997 N=770)

Next, respondents were read specific descriptions of the various crimes listed in Table 1, and for each they were asked if they had been a victim of that crime in the past year. Rural Albertans were most likely to have been a victim of vandalism (9%), followed by theft/attempted theft of personal property (8%), motor vehicle or parts theft (7%), theft/attempted theft of household property (6%) and break and enter (6%).

Table 1

In the past year, were you a victim of a…?			
	Percent of Respondents (N=800)		
	Yes	***No***	***Don't Know/Not Stated***
Vandalism	9	91	-
Theft/attempted theft of personal property	8	92	1
Motor vehicle or parts theft	7	93	0
Theft/attempted theft of household property	6	94	-
Break and enter	6	94	0
Robbery	5	95	0
Assault	4	96	-
Sexual assault	-	100	0
Other	6	94	-

'-' = 0.1%-0.4%

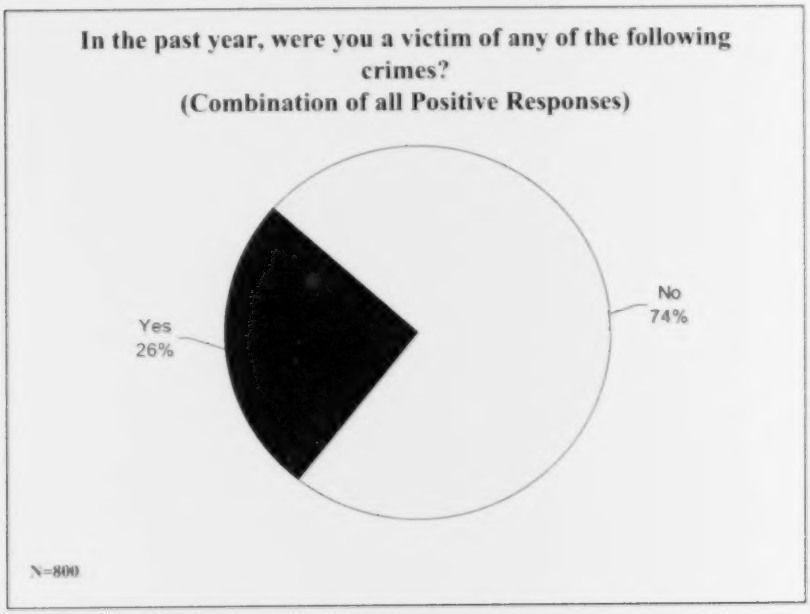
Six percent (6%) of respondents (n=45) said they had been victims of other crimes. When asked what other types of crimes were committed against them, responses were as listed in Table 2.

Table 2

What other type of crime was committed against you?	
	Number of Respondents (n=45)
Hit and run	4
Trespassing	4
Uttering threats	4
Verbal harassment	4
Littering	2
Restatement of crimes already mentioned	19
Other (one mention per item)	6
Don't Know/Not Stated	2
Total	***45***

Figure 14 shows that, when read specific descriptions of various crimes, a total of 26% of rural Albertans indicated that they had been a victim of a crime. When asked only whether or not they had been a victim of a crime in the previous year, only 14% said they had been a victim (see Figure 13). The difference in these results reflects the fact that the more specific the description of the crime, the more likely it is that a respondent will recall that they have been a victim of that crime. When measuring victimization rates, Statistics Canada's General Social Survey provides respondents with specific descriptions of various crimes.

Figure 14



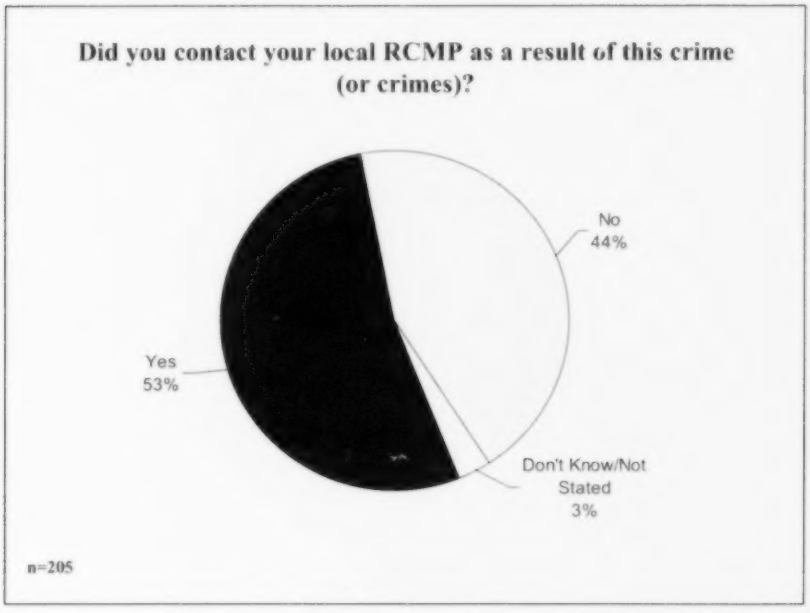
3.3 CONTACT WITH POLICE

3.3.1 Contact with RCMP as a Result of Crime(s)

Those rural Albertans who had a crime committed against them in the past year were asked to indicate whether they contacted their local RCMP as a result of the crime or crimes.

Approximately half (53%) of those rural Albertans who reported having a crime or crimes committed against them the previous year said that they contacted their local RCMP as a result of the crime(s), as shown in Figure 15.

Figure 15



Respondents were most likely to have contacted the police if they had been a victim of break and enter (73%), followed by a victim of vehicle theft (66%), sexual assault (66%), robbery (63%), household property theft (63%), other crimes as listed in Table 4 (62%), vandalism (59%), personal property theft (48%), or assault (45%).

3.3.2 Reason(s) for not Contacting Local RCMP

Those rural Albertans who did not contact their local RCMP as a result of the crime(s) that were committed against them were asked to indicate why they did not contact the RCMP.

Of the 90 respondents who did not contact their local RCMP as a result of the crime(s), one in five (20%) identified their main reason as the damage or vandalism not being severe enough, while 14% stated that it was a waste of time or not worth reporting to the RCMP. See Table 3.

Table 3

Why did you not contact your local RCMP?	
	Percent of Respondents (n=90)
Damage/vandalism not severe enough	20
Waste of time/better things to do/not worth reporting	14
RCMP will do nothing to solve the case/crime	8
Was something discovered missing months ago/not here	8
Not necessary/not a victim/nothing taken	6
Crime(s) happened while living in Edmonton/Calgary	4
RCMP was contacted by someone else/another victim	4
Not enough substantiating evidence	4
Knew the perpetrator personally/discovered who it was	4
Took matters into own hands/vigilantism	3
Unsure if it was an actual crime	3
Distance from RCMP/inability/difficulty in contacting them	2
Insurance premiums would increase	2
Problem solved quickly/they were caught/arrested	2
Other (only 1% per mention)	7
None	7
Don't Know/Not Stated	9
Total	***107****

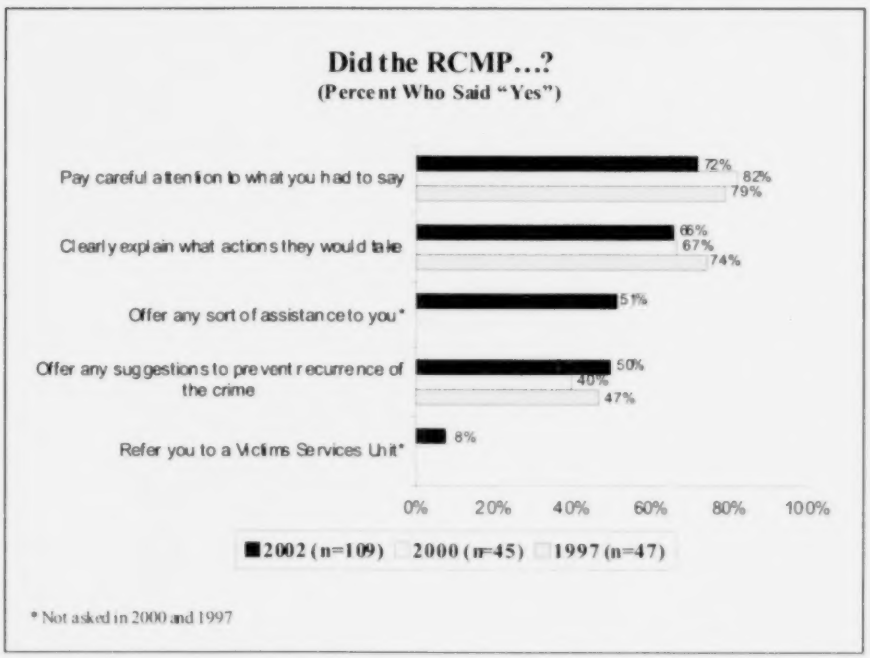
* Adds up to more than 100% due to multiple mentions.

3.3.3 Services Provided/Offered by RCMP to Victims

Those rural Albertans who had contacted their local RCMP as a result of the crime(s) committed against them were further asked a number of questions to identify which services were provided or offered to them by the RCMP after the crime or traumatic incident.

As depicted in Figure 16, of the rural crime victims who contacted their local RCMP (n=109), 72% stated that the RCMP paid careful attention to what they had to say, 66% said that the RCMP clearly explained what actions they would take, 51% said they were offered assistance, half (50%) stated that the RCMP offered suggestions to prevent recurrence of the crime, and less than one in ten (8%) rural crime victims were referred to a Victims Services Unit.

Figure 16



Regarding referral to a Victims Services Unit, victims who had contacted their local RCMP and who had been a break and enter victim were most likely to have been referred to a Victims Services Unit (19%), followed by those who had been a victim of household property theft (16%), assault (15%), personal property theft (10%), vandalism (10%), robbery (8%), vehicle theft (8%), or other crimes as listed in Table 4 (7%). Of the two sexual assault victims who said that they had contacted their local RCMP as a result of a crime or crimes, neither were referred to a Victims Services Unit.

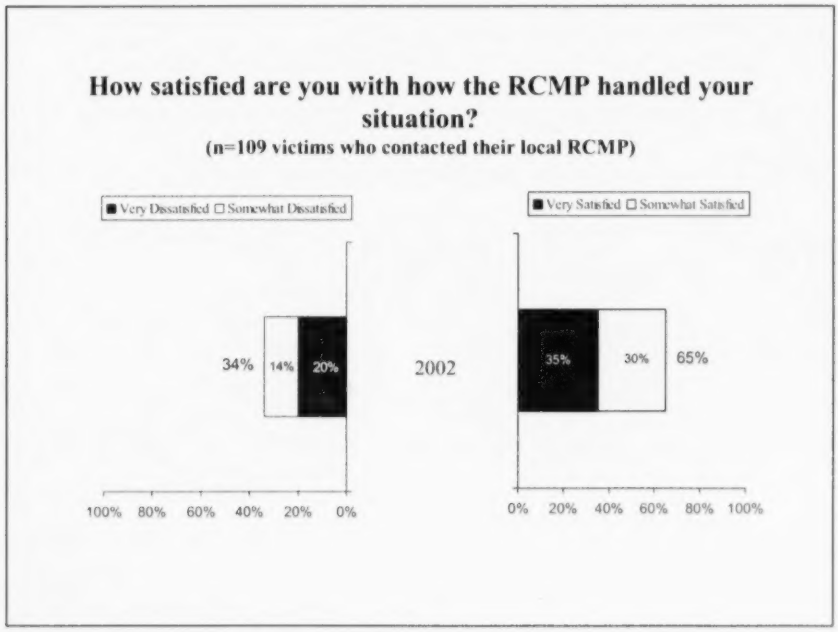
Since 2000, there has been a 10% decrease in the percentage of rural Albertans who indicated that the RCMP paid careful attention to what they had to say (72% in 2002 vs. 82% in 2000). There has been little change in the percentage who indicated that the RCMP clearly explained what actions they would take (66% in 2002 vs. 67% in 2000), while there has been a 10% increase in the percentage who stated that the RCMP offered suggestions to prevent recurrence of the crime (50% in 2002 vs. 40% in 2000).

3.3.4 Satisfaction with How RCMP Handled Their Situation

Those rural Albertans who contacted the RCMP as a result of the crime(s) committed against them were further asked to rate how satisfied they are with how the RCMP handled their situation, using a scale of "very satisfied," "somewhat satisfied," "somewhat dissatisfied" and "very dissatisfied."

As illustrated in Figure 17, 65% of rural crime victims were satisfied with how the RCMP handled their situation, of which 35% were very satisfied and 30% were somewhat satisfied. Thirty-four percent (34%) of rural crime victims were dissatisfied with how their situation was handled by the RCMP (14% somewhat dissatisfied and 20% very dissatisfied).

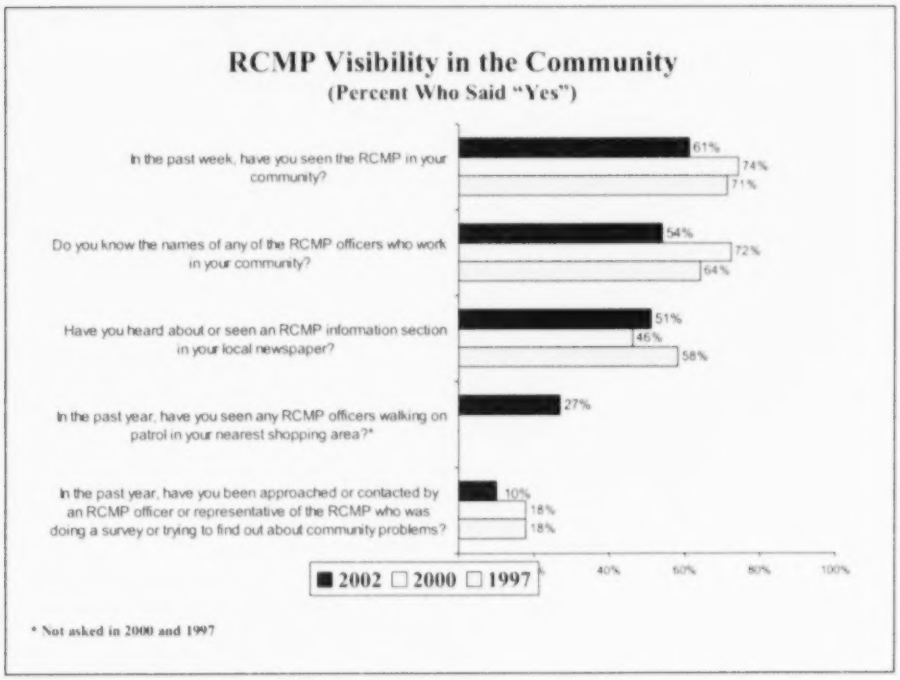
Figure 17



3.3.5 RCMP Visibility in the Community

Next, all respondents (N=800) were asked a number of questions regarding the visibility of the RCMP in their community. Approximately three in five (61%) rural Albertans have seen the RCMP in their community in the past week, 54% indicated that they know the names of at least one of the RCMP officers who work in their community, just over half (51%) have heard about or seen an RCMP information section in their local newspaper, roughly one-quarter (27%) have seen RCMP officers walking on patrol in their nearest shopping area in the past year, one in ten (10%) have been approached or contacted by an RCMP officer or representative who was doing a survey or trying to find out about community problems in the past year. See Figure 18.

Figure 18


RCMP Visibility in the Community
(Percent Who Said "Yes")
In the past week, have you seen the RCMP in your community?
61%
74%
71%
Do you know the names of any of the RCMP officers who work in your community?
54%
72%
64%
Have you heard about or seen an RCMP information section in your local newspaper?
51%
46%
58%
In the past year, have you seen any RCMP officers walking on patrol in your nearest shopping area?*
27%
In the past year, have you been approached or contacted by an RCMP officer or representative of the RCMP who was doing a survey or trying to find out about community problems?
10%
18%
18%
2002 2000 1997
40%
60%
80%
100%
* Not asked in 2000 and 1997

Since 2000, there has been a decrease in the number of rural Albertans who:

- Have seen the RCMP in their community (61% in 2002, compared to 74% in 2000).
- Have been approached or contacted by an RCMP officer or representative of the RCMP who was doing a survey or trying to find out about community problems (10% in 2002, compared to 18% in 2000).
- Know the names of any of the RCMP officers who work in their community (54% in 2002, compared to 72% in 2000).

There has been a slight 5% increase in the percentage of rural Albertans who have heard about or seen an RCMP information section in their local newspaper (51% in 2002, compared to 46% in 2000.

The following subgroups were more likely to have seen the RCMP in their community:

- North District residents (64% of North District, compared to 58% of South District residents).
- Younger rural Albertans (67% of those 18-34 years of age, compared to 54% of those 55 years of age and older).
- Those residing in a village or town (70% of village or town residents, compared to 53% of those residing on a farm or acreage).

The following subgroups were more likely to know the name of an RCMP officer who works in their community:

- Respondents 35 to 54 years of age (62% of those 35 to 54 years of age, compared to 55% of those 18 to 34 years of age and 40% of those 55 years and older).
- Village or town residents (59% of those residing in a village or town, compared to 50% of those residing on a farm or acreage).
- Rural Albertans with a post-secondary education (59% of those with a post-secondary education, compared to 48% of those without).

The following subgroups were more likely to have seen an RCMP information section in their local newspaper:

- Non-victims of crime (55% of those not victimized by a crime in the past 12 months, compared to 42% of those victimized by a crime).
- Males (55% of males, compared to 48% of females).
- Rural Albertans with an income of $40,000 to $80,000 (58% of rural Albertans with an income of $40,000 to $80,000, compared to 49% of those with an income of under $40,000 and 46% of those with an income of $80,000 or more).

The following subgroup was more likely to have seen the RCMP walking on patrol in their nearest shopping area:

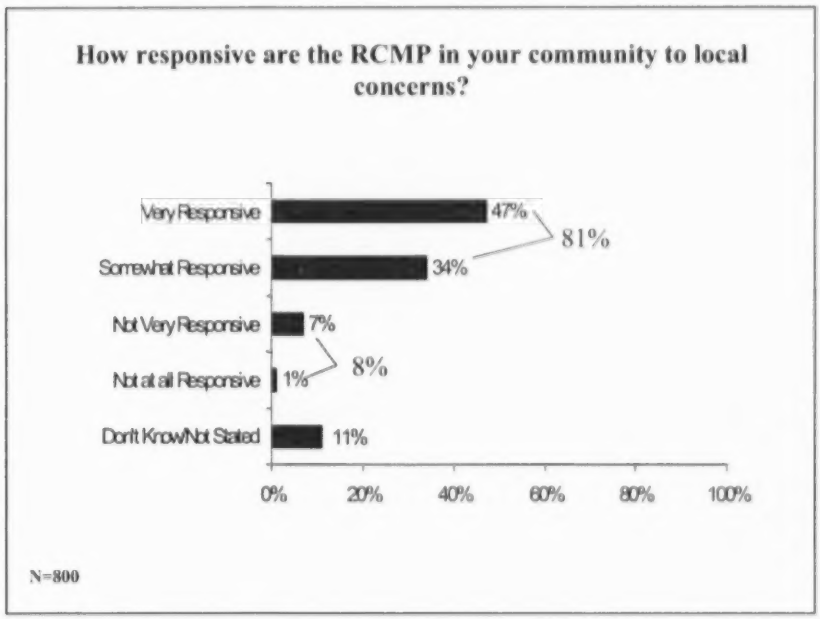
- Younger rural Albertans (31% of those 18-34 years of age, compared to 22% of those 55 years of age and older).

3.3.6 Responsiveness to Local Community Concerns

Rural Albertans were then asked to rate how responsive they feel the RCMP are in their community to local concerns, using a scale of "very responsive," "somewhat responsive," "not very responsive" and "not at all responsive."

Most rural Albertans (81%) said that the RCMP are responsive in meeting their local community concerns, of which 47% stated they are very responsive and 34% stated that they are somewhat responsive (Figure 19).

Figure 19



Higher responsiveness ratings were provided by:

- Respondents residing in the South RCMP District (86% felt they are responsive vs. 76% in the North RCMP District).

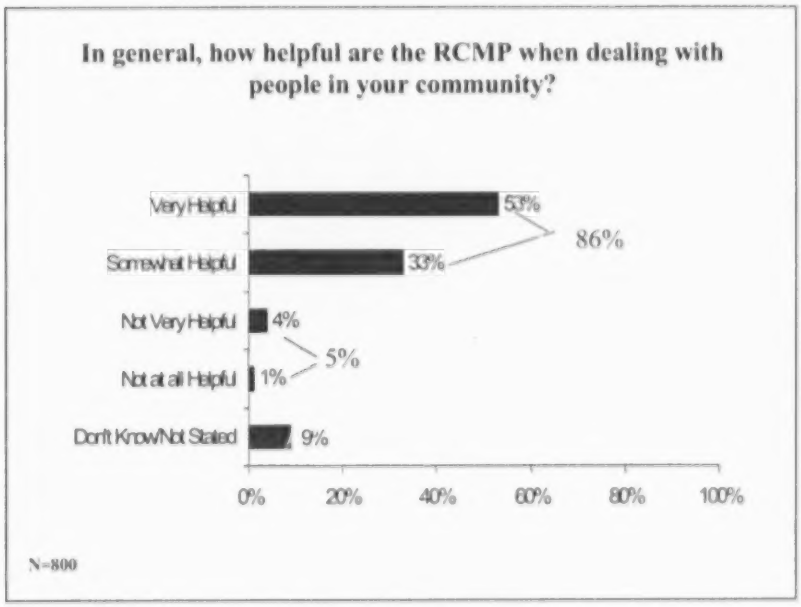
- Respondents living in villages and towns (84% felt they are very responsive vs. 78% of those living on a farm or acreage).

3.3.7 Helpfulness in Dealing With Local Community

Rural Albertans were also asked to rate how helpful the RCMP are when dealing with people in their local community, using a scale of "very helpful," "somewhat helpful," "not very helpful" and "not at all helpful."

The vast majority (86%) of rural Albertans identified the RCMP as being helpful when dealing with people in their community (53% very helpful and 33% somewhat helpful). See Figure 20.

Figure 20



There were no differences in the overall helpfulness ratings provided among the various subgroups surveyed.

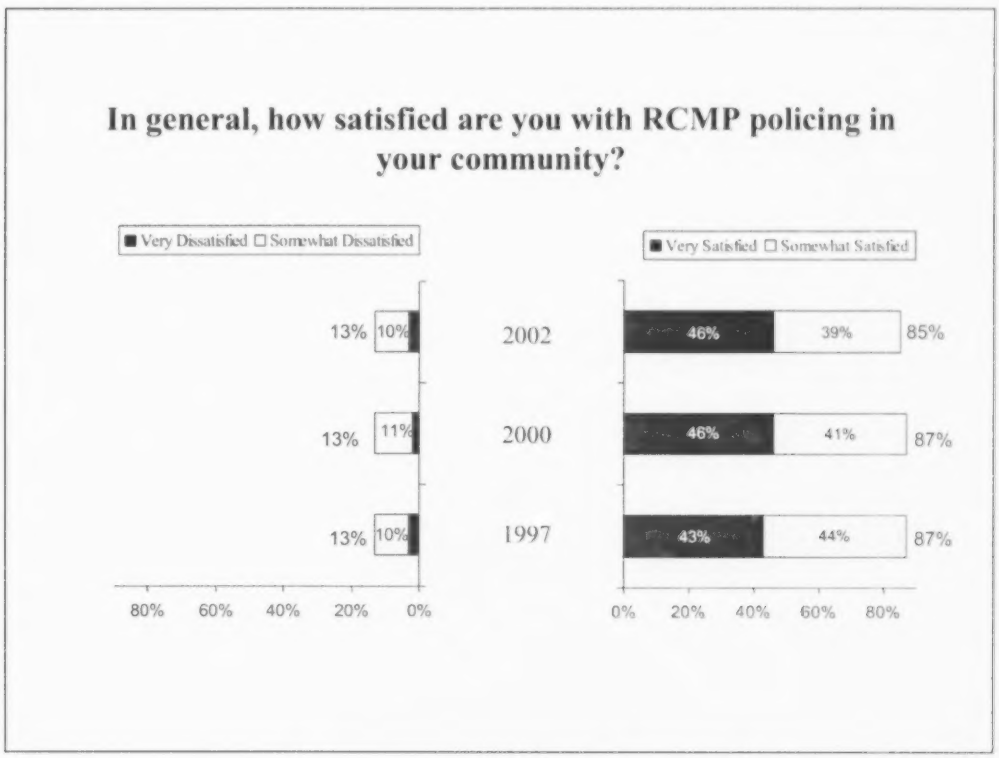
3.4 SATISFACTION WITH POLICING

3.4.1 General Satisfaction with RCMP Policing

To measure general satisfaction with RCMP policing, rural Albertans were asked to rate how satisfied they are with RCMP policing in their community, using a scale of "very satisfied," "somewhat satisfied," "somewhat dissatisfied" and "very dissatisfied."

Overall satisfaction with the RCMP policing is high, as 85% of rural Albertans are satisfied with RCMP policing in their community, including 46% who are very satisfied and 39% who are somewhat satisfied. The level of satisfaction has remained about the same since 1997. See Figure 21.

Figure 21



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Overall satisfaction was lower (72% satisfied) among those who have been a victim of crime (n=205) versus those who have not been a victim of crime over the last 12 months (90% satisfied). Additionally, younger respondents aged 18 to 34 (53% satisfied) had lower satisfaction than those 35 years and older (87% satisfied).

3.4.2 Reason(s) for Being Dissatisfied with RCMP Policing

There were 102 respondents who indicated that they were dissatisfied with RCMP policing. When prompted to provide reasons as to why they were dissatisfied (Table 4), the reason indicated most often was their lack of manpower, presence and visibility in the community (30%). Eighteen percent (18%) identified the slow response time of the RCMP and that they do not come when called. Ten percent of those dissatisfied with RCMP policing each mentioned that the RCMP go out of their way to ticket people for minor offenses or harass people, that the demeanor of officers is less than respectful, uncaring or discriminatory, and that they could not get help from the RCMP when it was needed. Other less frequently mentioned reasons are also presented in Table 4.

Table 4

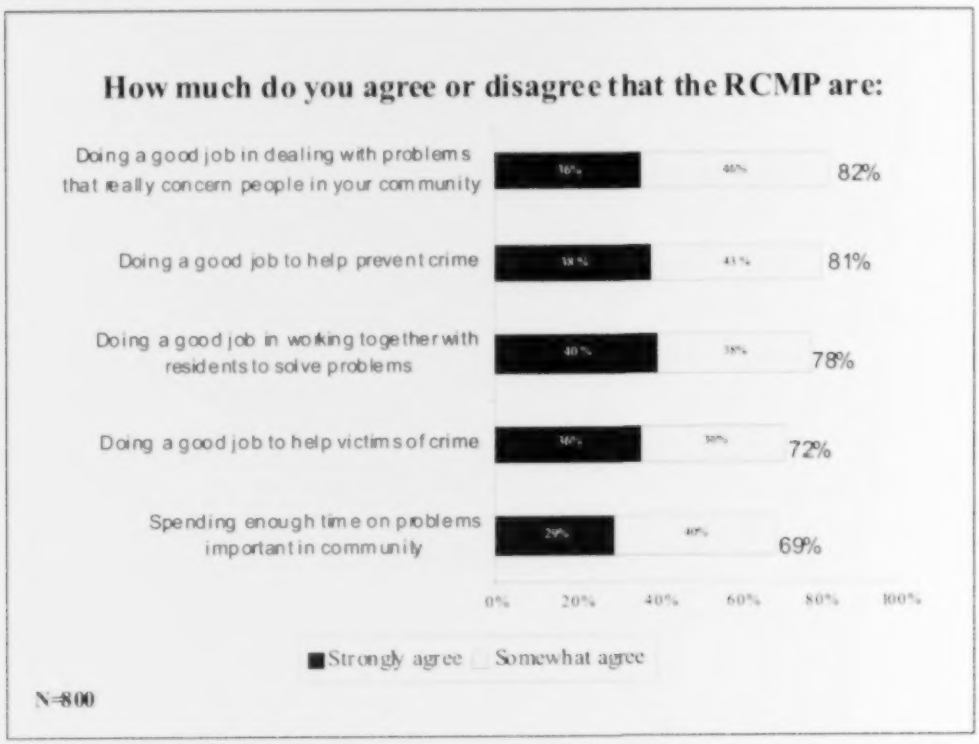
Why are you dissatisfied?	
	Percent of Respondents (n=102)
Not enough manpower/lack of presence/visibility	30
Response time is too slow/do not come when called	18
Go out of their way to ticket people for minor offenses/harass people	10
Demeanor of officers less than respectful/uncaring/discriminatory	10
Could not get help from RCMP when needed	10
Need more preventative/proactive crime strategies	8
No detachment near community or town/too far away	8
Youth crime problems/too lax with young offenders	6
They are ignorant/not on top of things/do not do a good job	5
Drugs are easily available/drug situation not dealt with adequately	4
Real criminals get a slap on the wrist/serious crimes ignored	4
Patrol and ticket people too much	3
Seem unwilling to investigate/respond only if necessary	3
Are lazy/just drive around	2
Are things police should be able to help people with, but don't	2
RCMP are all talk – no action	2
Do not enforce traffic offenses	2
Other (only 1% per mention)	7
Don't Know/Not Stated	10
Total	***144****

* Adds up to more than 100% due to multiple mentions.

3.4.3 Ratings of Specific Attributes of Community Policing

All respondents were read a list of five statements about community policing and were asked to provide their level of agreement with each statement, using a scale of "strongly agree," "somewhat agree," "somewhat disagree" and "strongly disagree." Figure 30 shows that the majority agreed with all five statements. The highest agreement was with the statement that "the RCMP are doing a good job in dealing with the problems that really concern people in your community" (82% agreed), while the lowest agreement was with the statement "the RCMP are spending enough time on the problems that are important in your community" (69% agreed).

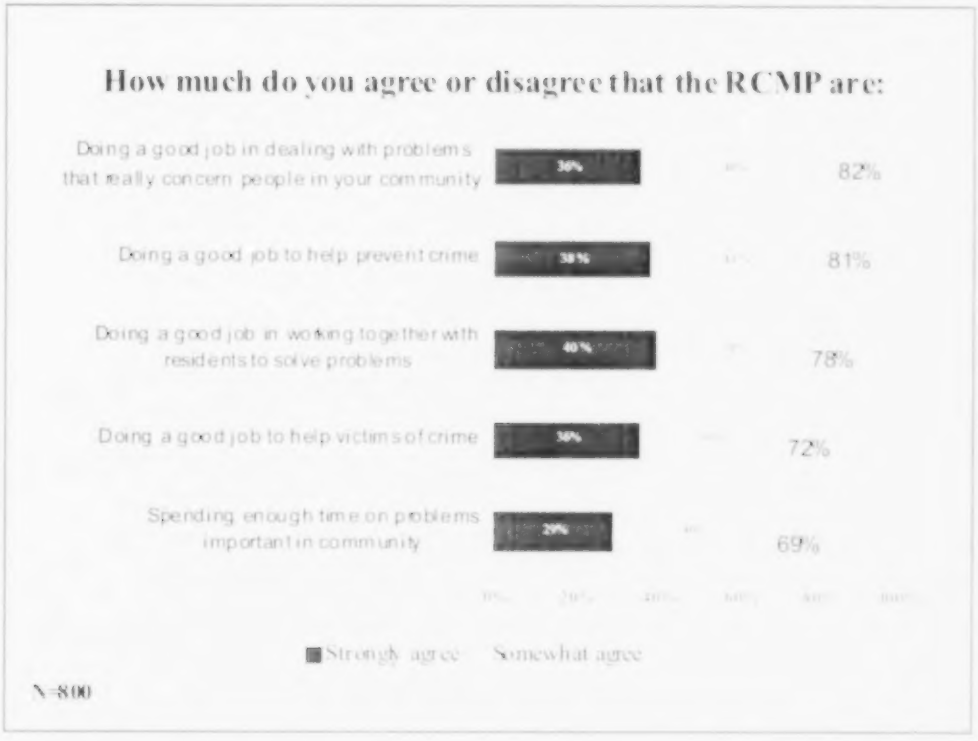
Figure 22


How much do you agree or disagree that the RCMP are:
Doing a good job in dealing with problems that really concern people in your community
82%
Doing a good job to help prevent crime
81%
Doing a good job in working together with residents to solve problems
78%
Doing a good job to help victims of crime
72%
Spending enough time on problems important in community
69%
0%
20%
40%
60%
80%
100%
Strongly agree
Somewhat agree
N=800

3.4.3 Ratings of Specific Attributes of Community Policing

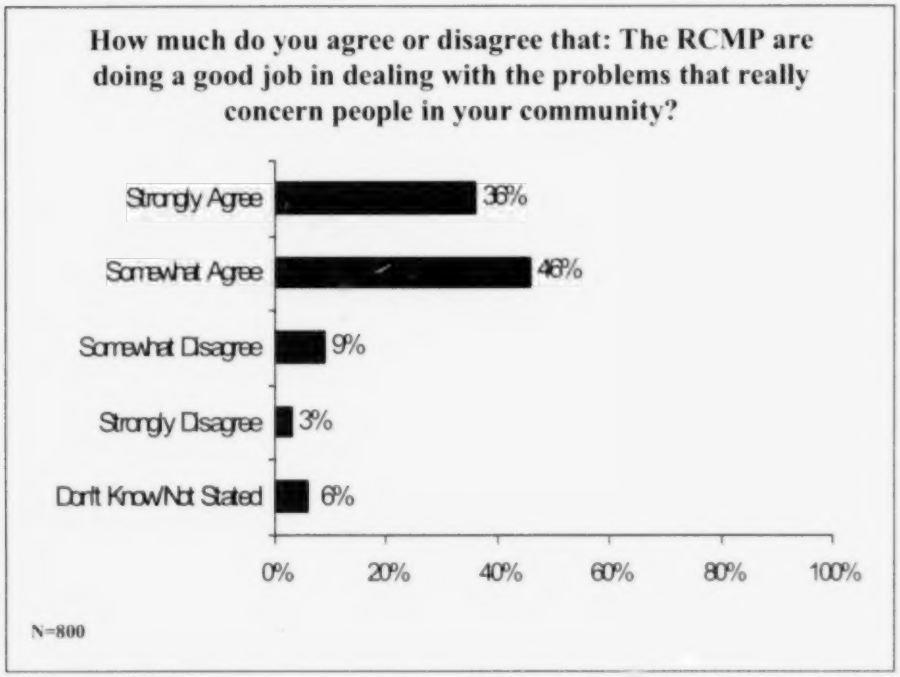
All respondents were read a list of five statements about community policing and were asked to provide their level of agreement with each statement, using a scale of "strongly agree," "somewhat agree," "somewhat disagree" and "strongly disagree." Figure 30 shows that the majority agreed with all five statements. The highest agreement was with the statement that "the RCMP are doing a good job in dealing with the problems that really concern people in your community" (82% agreed), while the lowest agreement was with the statement "the RCMP are spending enough time on the problems that are important in your community" (69% agreed).

Figure 22


How much do you agree or disagree that the RCMP are:
Doing a good job in dealing with problems that really concern people in your community
36%
82%
Doing a good job to help prevent crime
38%
81%
Doing a good job in working together with residents to solve problems
40%
78%
Doing a good job to help victims of crime
36%
72%
Spending enough time on problems important in community
29%
69%
Strongly agree
Somewhat agree
N=800

Figures 23 to 27 show the levels of agreement and disagreement, as well as the levels of non-response, for each of the five statements. As illustrated in Figure 23, the majority (82%) of rural Albertans agreed that the RCMP are doing a good job in dealing with the problems that really concern people in their community, while 12% disagreed and 6% did not provide an opinion.

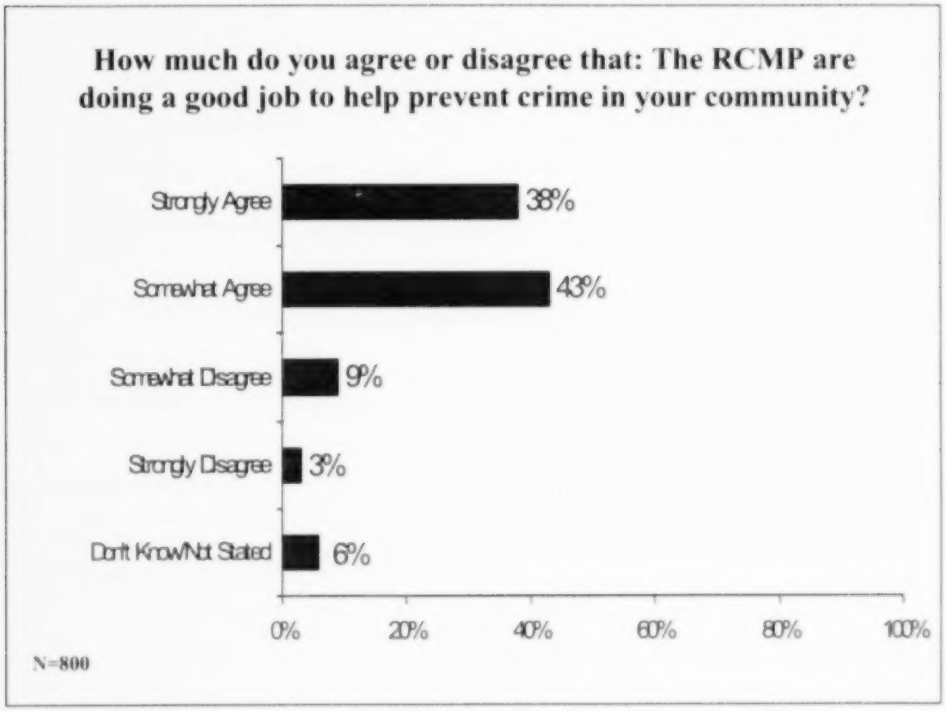
Figure 23



Upon reviewing the detailed tables of results, victims (n=205) were less likely (70% agreed) than non-victims of crime (86% agreed) to agree that the RCMP are doing a good job in dealing with the problems that really concern people in their community.

Agreement with the statement that the RCMP are doing a good job to help prevent crime in their community was 81%, while 12% disagreed and 6% did not provide an opinion. See Figure 24.

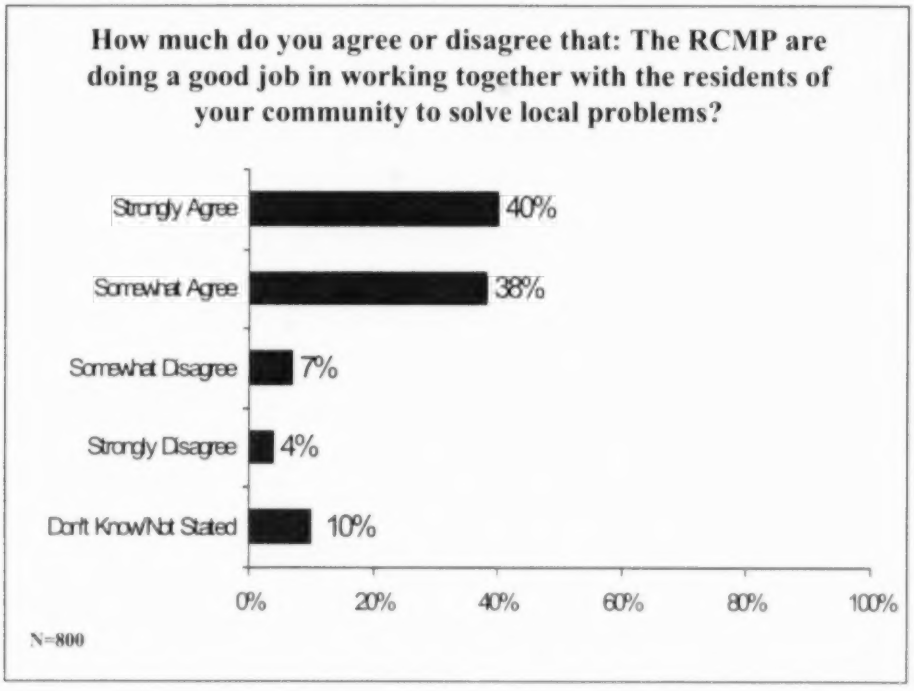
Figure 24



Again, agreement was higher amongst those not victimized by a crime in the last 12 months (85% agreed) versus those who have been victimized by crime (72% agreed).

Approximately three-quarters (78%) of rural Albertans agreed with the statement that the RCMP are doing a good job in working together with the residents of their communities to solve local problems, while 11% disagreed and 10% did not provide an opinion. See Figure 25.

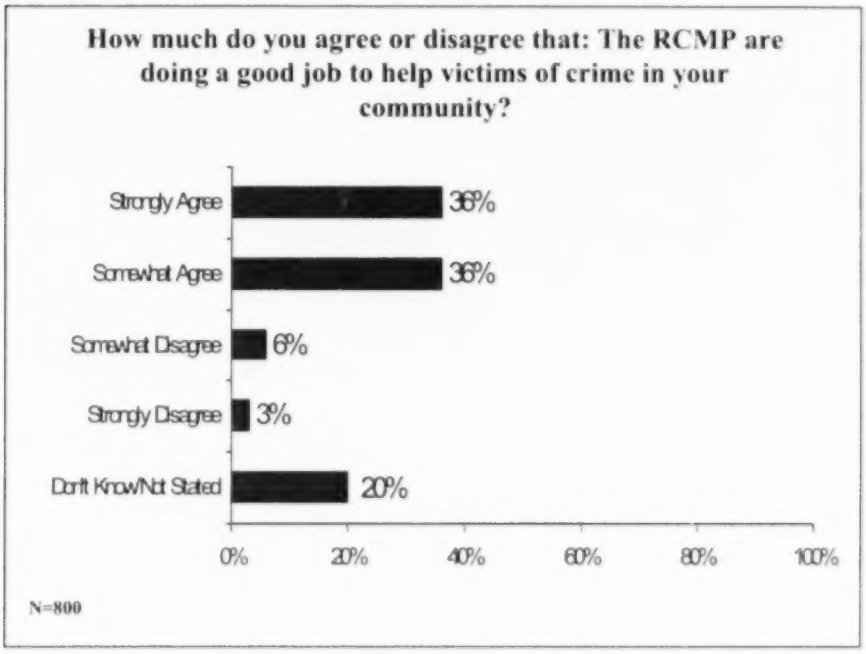
Figure 25



Victims of crime in the last twelve months were somewhat less likely (72% agreed) than non-victims (81% agreed) to agree that the RCMP are doing a good job in working together with the residents of their local community.

The statement that the RCMP are doing a good job to help the victims of crime in their community, garners an overall agreement of 72% (36% strongly agreed and 36% somewhat agreed), while 9% disagreed and 20% did not provide an opinion. See Figure 26.

Figure 26

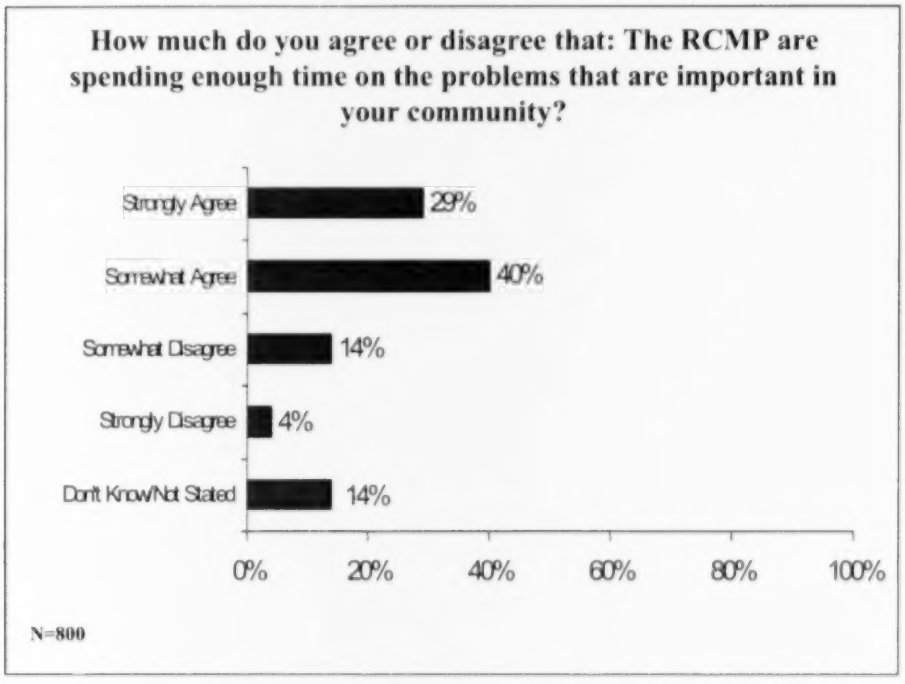


Overall agreement with the statement that the RCMP are doing a good job to help victims of crime in their community was higher amongst:

- Residents of the South RCMP District (74% of residents of the South RCMP District, compared to 69% of the residents of the North RCMP District).
- Non-victims of crime (74% of non-victims of crime, compared to 66% of victims of crime).

When asked to provide a level of agreement with the statement that the RCMP are spending enough time on the problems that are important in their community, 69% agreed, 18% disagreed and 14% did not state an opinion (Figure 27).

Figure 27



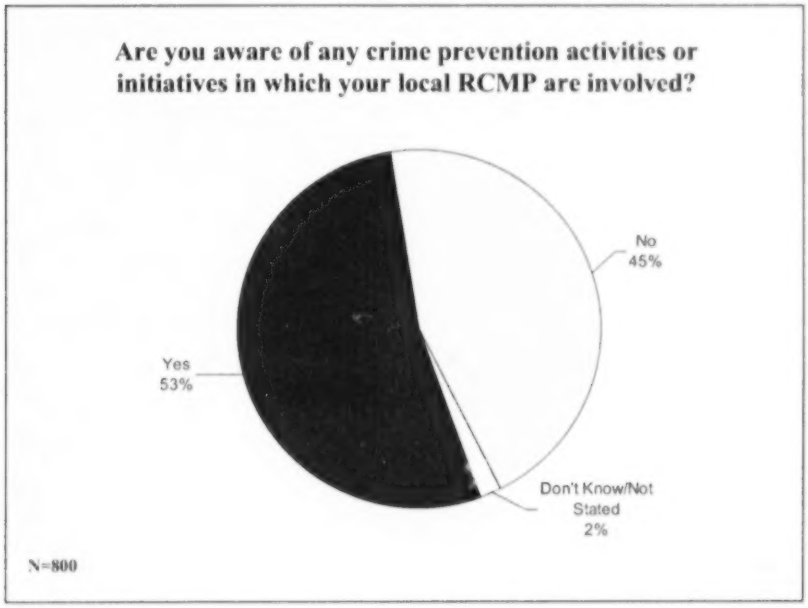
Agreement with this statement was somewhat higher amongst those who had not been a victim of crime during the last year (72%), compared to those who have been victimized (60%).

3.5 CRIME PREVENTION ACTIVITIES/COMMUNICATIONS

3.5.1 Awareness of Crime Prevention Activities/Initiatives

When asked if they are aware of any crime prevention activities or initiatives in which their local RCMP are involved, just over half (53%) of rural Albertans indicated that they are aware of at least one crime prevention activity or initiative. See Figure 28.

Figure 28



Respondents aged 35 to 54 years of age (61%) were more likely than those 55 years of age and older (49%) and those 18 to 34 (45%) to indicate that they are aware of at least one crime prevention strategy or initiative.

Those living on a farm or an acreage (57%) were also more likely to be aware than those residing in a town or village (47%). Those with a post-secondary education (60%) were more aware than those without (46%).

Those earning $80,000 a year or more (60%) were most likely to indicate that they are aware of at least one crime prevention activity or strategy, compared to 44% for those earning less than $40,000 per year.

3.5.2 RCMP Involvement in Crime Prevention Activities/Initiatives

Respondents who indicated that they are aware of at least one crime prevention activity or initiative in which the RCMP are involved were further asked to name the initiatives or activities in which the RCMP are involved.

Of those crime prevention activities or initiatives identified by rural Albertans in Table 5, the most frequently mentioned was the Rural Crime Watch or Crime Watch programs, identified by 39% of respondents. Other activities or initiatives mentioned by greater than 5% of respondents include:

- DARE Program or other drug programs – 18%
- Education where the RCMP go to schools to talk to youth – 16%
- Citizens on Patrol (COP) – 13%
- Crime Stoppers or Crime Tip or Crime Watchers – 7%
- Victims Services Programs – 6%
- Neighbourhood Watch – 5%

Other activities or initiatives were identified by fewer than 5% of respondents.

Table 5

In what crime prevention activities or initiatives are your local RCMP involved?	
	Percent of Respondents (n=421)
Rural Crime Watch/Crime Watch	39
DARE Program/drug programs	18
Education – go to schools to talk to youth/kids	16
Citizens on Patrol (COP)	13
Crime stoppers/Crime Tip/Crime Watchers	7
Victims Services/Victims of Violence	6
Neighbourhood Watch	5
Block Parents	3
Checkstops	3
Youth groups/activities/programs	3
Pedal bike registration/bicycle safety	3
Frequent patrolling	2
Speaking on crime prevention/crime prevention week	2
Local newspaper columns/announcements	1
Traffic safety/education	1
MADD	1
Community watch/community policing/awareness	1
Liaison between RCMP and communities	1
Police advertisements	1
Range patrol	1
Other (less than 1% per mention)	13
Don't Know/Not Stated	9
Total	***149****

* Adds up to more than 100% due to multiple mentions.

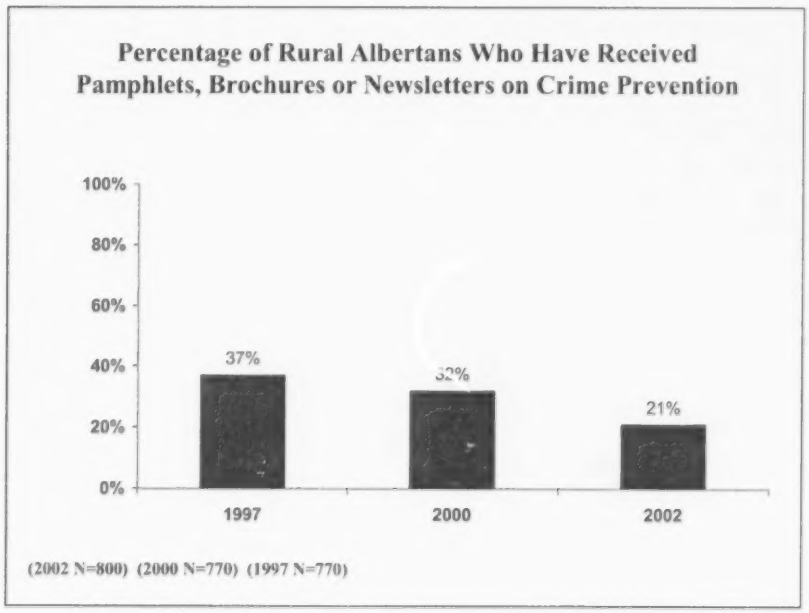
3.5.3 Received Pamphlets, Brochures or Newsletters

Respondents were then asked to indicate whether they had received any pamphlets, brochures or newsletters that describe what they can do to protect themselves or their home from crime.

Approximately one in five (21%) rural Albertans have received a pamphlet, brochure or newsletter describing what they can do to protect themselves or their home from crime. See Figure 29.

There has been a steady decrease in the percentage of rural Albertans who have received pamphlets, brochures or newsletters that describe what they can do to protect themselves or their home from crime (21% in 2002, compared to 32% in 2000 and 37% in 1997).

Figure 29



Rural Albertans, aged 55 years and older were most likely to have received a pamphlet, brochure or newsletter (27%).

3.5.4 Organizations that Distributed Pamphlets, Brochures or Newsletters

When asked what organization or group distributed these pamphlets, brochures or newsletters, 8% mentioned the RCMP, police or their local detachment, 8% stated Rural Crime Watch or Crime Watch and 7% identified their local newspaper or a newsletter. Other less frequently mentioned organizations or groups are also listed in Table 6.

Table 6

What organization or group distributed these pamphlets, brochures or newsletters?	
	Percent of Respondents (n=167)
RCMP/police/local detachment	8
Rural Crime Watch/Crime Watch	8
Local newspaper/newsletter	7
Salesman selling home security system	4
Insurance company	4
Schools	4
Local municipality	2
Citizens on Patrol (COP)	1
Distributed at a seminar for seniors	1
Neighbourhood Watch	1
Victims Services	1
Crime Stoppers	1
Other (less than 1% per mention)	10
None	2
Don't Know/Not Stated	49
Total	***103****

* Adds up to more than 100% due to multiple mentions.

3.6 Suggested Additional Activities

Respondents were further provided with the opportunity to identify any other things that they would like to see the RCMP doing in their community. A long list of suggested additional activities were provided, the most frequently mentioned of which were related to having more manpower and visibility (21%). See Table 7 for other less frequently mentioned additional activities rural Albertans would like to see the RCMP doing in their communities.

Table 7

Are there any other things that you would like to see the RCMP doing in your community?	
	Percent of Respondents (N=800)
Be in area more often/have greater visibility/more patrols needed/ need more RCMP/more manpower/patrol communities more frequently	21
Be more active in community/greater public relations	4
Talk more with school children/more school programs	3
Greater enforcement of young offender laws	3
Catch traffic violators	3
Address/control the drug problem	2
Have more programs for youth	2
Greater enforcement of laws/regulations	1
Patrol highways more frequently/greater traffic patrol	1
Have a faster response time	1
RCMP do the best they can with available resources	1
Have more foot patrols	1
More local traffic enforcement	1
Have more respect for citizens/victims of crime	1
Other (less than 1% per mention)	12
Nothing else needed	51
Don't Know/Not Stated	11
Total	***119****

* Adds up to more than 100% due to multiple mentions.